

Silver Jubilee of Ordination of Fr. Albert D'Souza

Mass was held on Sunday 3rd April to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Fr Albert D'Souza and what was witnessed was an overwhelming display of the high esteem and love that parishioners have for this humble and gentle priest.

The Mass at Kurri Kurri was attended by around three hundred friends, fellow priests and parishioners from Abermain/Kurri Kurri, Cessnock, Singleton, Maitland and Greta/Branxton congregations, most of whom stayed for morning tea in the parish hall. This was followed by lunch at Kurri Kurri Bowling Club with over sixty in attendance, happy to continue the celebrations.

All who attended were enthusiastic in their praise for Fr Albert and the significant contribution he has made to worship for those attending Mass at Kurri Kurri, Abermain and Cessnock as well as his unselfish service to the sick and housebound and the visits that he always manages to find time to conduct.

Fr Albert was born in Yedoga, India, the 11th child of devoted parents. As a child he was required to take care of the cattle, taking them into the forest to find food. Although he experienced a loving upbringing, the family continually faced poverty.

His schooling included education by nuns and he was encouraged to enter the seminary. The nuns helped with his application. Albert proved that the nuns' faith in him was well founded and he completed 11 years of study at university and St Peter's Seminary, Bangalore.

Fr Albert worked in a number of parishes and ultimately took on responsibility for an orphanage of 120 boys as well as farm and parish community work.

A meeting with his Bishop planted the seed for Fr Albert to come to Australia where there is a shortage of priests. A meeting with Bishop Michael and Fr Brian Mascord who were visiting India followed and Fr Albert was encouraged to come to the diocese.

His gentleness and humility, beautiful smile and a willingness to support those in need has made him a warm favourite with all those with whom he has come in contact, both within and beyond Parishes of Kurri Kurri and Cessnock.